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RELIGION AND HUMAN INTERESTS

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JOANNES WRIGHT, S.J.,
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Nihil Obstat.

F. THOS. BERGH, O.S.B.,
CENSOR DEPUTATUS.

Imprimatur.

EDM. CAN. SURMONT,
VICARIUS GENERALIS.

WESTMONASTERII,
Die 27 Decembris, 1917.

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RELIGION AND HUMAN INTERESTS

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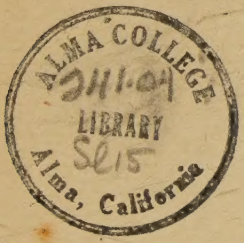

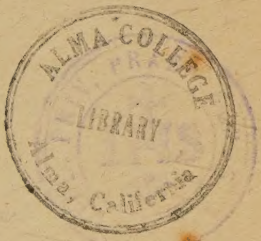

R. & T. WASHBOURNE, LTD.

PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

AND AT MANCHESTER, BIRMINGHAM, AND GLASGOW

1918

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PREFACE

PRIMARILY, religion has to do with man's duty towards his Creator. It prescribes the worship which is due to the Creator from the creature. However, this is not religion's only function. It sheds its benign influence on every department of human life. It is the keystone in the arch of human conduct, it keeps all other duties in their place, while explaining and enforcing them. I have attempted to bring out this function of religion in the following pages. The war has compelled many thoughtful men to re-examine their scale of values; if this little book affords any help in the task, it will have fulfilled its writer's desires.

My thanks are due to the editor of the *Catholic Times* for permission to republish matter which first appeared as articles in that paper.

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RELIGION AND HUMAN INTERESTS

CHAPTER I

THE MEANING OF RELIGION

I PROPOSE in this little book to discuss the relations which exist between religion and other human interests. We shall thus gain a clearer knowledge of what religion is, we shall appreciate it more, and we should be induced to practise it more faithfully and more zealously.

But, first of all, we must be sure that we have a clear and correct notion of what religion means. The word has had very different meanings at different times and for different writers on the subject. Lactantius, who wrote at the time of the first Christian Emperor of Rome, tells us that all pagan religions consisted only in rites and ceremonies performed in the worship of the gods; they did not trouble themselves about morality. A modern authority on the subject agrees with Lactantius. "If any of the thinkers of antiquity," says M. Jastrow, "had been asked to define religion, the same answer would have been given by each one—the worship of the gods."* Matthew Arnold thought that religion was only Morality touched with Emotion. For Fichte religion was a view of the world;

* M. Jastrow, *The Study of Religion*, p. 131.

it furnished the supreme truth by man's contemplation of himself as the mirror in which God is reflected. For Schleiermacher religion was neither metaphysics nor morality; it was a state of feeling, which arises at the moment that we become conscious of a contact between ourselves and the universe. Lucretius and Hume identified religion with superstition. Man finds himself in the grip of natural forces vastly more powerful than himself; he personifies those forces of nature, and through fear seeks to propitiate them. According to Herbert Spencer, religion has to do with the infinite, and as man's very finite capacities cannot attain to the infinite, which must always remain unknowable, agnosticism is the only reasonable attitude for man to take up with regard to religion. Since the rise of the historical school of students of religion there has been more agreement as to what religion is. It is admitted that religion is a universal phenomenon of human nature; that as man is a rational animal so he is also a religious animal; that religion is a permanent element in the chequered career of humanity, and in a sense the only permanent element that is to be found there.

The views of the modern school of students of religion are well summed up for us by Pius X. in his condemnation of the errors of the Modernists. The Holy Father says:

> "However, this Agnosticism is only the negative part of the system of the Modernists; the positive part consists in that they call vital immanence. Thus they advance from one to the other. Religion, whether natural or supernatural, must, like every other fact, admit of some explanation. But when natural theology has been destroyed, and the road to revelation

closed by the rejection of the arguments of credibility, and all external revelation absolutely denied, it is clear that this explanation will be sought in vain outside of man himself. It must therefore be looked for *in* man; and since religion is a form of life, the explanation must certainly be found in the life of man. In this way is formulated the principle of religious immanence. Moreover, the first actuation, so to speak, of every vital phenomenon—and religion, as noted above, belongs to this category—is due to a certain need or impulsion; but speaking more particularly of life, it has its origin in a movement of the heart, which movement is called a *sense*. Therefore, as God is the object of religion, we must conclude that faith, which is the basis and foundation of all religion, must consist in a certain interior sense, originating in a need of the divine. This need of the divine, which is experienced only in special and favourable circumstances, cannot of itself appertain to the domain of consciousness, but is first latent beneath consciousness, or, to borrow a term from modern philosophy, in the *subconsciousness*, where also its root lies hidden and undetected.

"It may perhaps be asked how it is that this need of the divine which man experiences within himself resolves itself into religion? To this question the Modernist reply would be as follows: Science and history are confined within two boundaries, the one external—namely, the visible world; the other internal, which is consciousness. When one or other of these limits has been reached, there can be no further progress, for beyond is the unknow-

able. In presence of this unknowable, whether it is outside man and beyond the visible world of nature, or lies hidden within the subconsciousness, the need of the divine in a soul which is prone to religion, excites—according to the principles of fideism, without any previous advertence of the mind—a certain special *sense*, and this sense possesses, implied within itself both as its own object and as its intrinsic cause, the divine *reality* itself, and in a way unites man with God. It is this sense to which Modernists give the name of faith, and this is what they hold to be the beginning of religion."*

Judged by principles such as these, all religions are equally natural and equally true. They are the product of religious experiences and of the religious instinct among peoples of very different characters and needs. They owe their origin and growth to very different circumstances, but they are all faithful manifestations of the human spirit ever striving and groping after the Infinite.

Very different from this is the teaching of the Catholic Church. She asserts and defends the dignity and power of the human intellect. She affirms that the great principle of causality is of universal application. The progress of science is due to the ceaseless application of that principle to the phenomena of nature; it is universally true, and should be applied fearlessly to the question of man's origin. If it is so applied we come to the knowledge of a supreme Being who made us and all that exists beside Himself. We have an intellect and a will; He who gave them to us must be similarly endowed, but in far greater measure. We

* Encyclical *Pascendi*, pp. 8, 9. English translation.

are persons, free and independent, with the right to work out our own destiny. Personality exists in its truest and fullest sense in our divine Creator.

As the Vatican Council solemnly declared:

> "The Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church believes and confesses that there is one true and living God, the Creator and Lord of heaven and earth, almighty, eternal, immense, incomprehensible, infinite in intellect and will and in every perfection; who since He is one, singular, altogether simple and unchanging spiritual substance, must be proclaimed really and essentially distinct from the world, in Himself and of Himself most blessed, and ineffably raised above all things which exist and can be conceived beside Himself. . . . The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known for certain from the things that He has created by the natural light of human reason. *For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*"*

Modern science, as interpreted by its best and highest representatives, does not contradict this teaching of the Catholic Church. On the contrary, it defends it. Not long before his death Lord Kelvin was asked to write down for publication what he had already expressed in public on this subject. At the request of the editor this prince of British scientists sent the following declaration to the *Nineteenth Century*, June, 1903:

> "I cannot admit that with regard to the origin of life, science neither affirms nor denies

* Sess. III., cc. 1, 2.

Creative Power. Science positively affirms Creative Power. It is not in dead matter that we live and move and have our being, but in the creating and directing Power which science compels us to accept as an article of belief. We cannot escape from that conclusion when we study the physics and dynamics of living and dead matter all around. Modern biologists are coming, I believe, once more to a firm acceptance of something beyond mere gravitational, chemical, and physical forces; and that unknown thing is a vital principle. We have an unknown object put before us in science. In thinking of that object we are all agnostics. We only know God in His works, but we are absolutely forced by science to believe with perfect confidence in a directive Power—in an influence other than physical, or dynamical, or electrical forces. Cicero (by some believed to have been editor of Lucretius) denied that men and plants and animals could come into existence by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. There is nothing between absolute scientific belief in a Creative Power, and the acceptance of the theory of a fortuitous concourse of atoms. Just think of a number of atoms falling together of their own accord and making a crystal, a sprig of moss, a microbe, a living animal. Cicero's expression, 'fortuitous concourse of atoms' is certainly not wholly inappropriate for the growth of a crystal. But modern scientific men are in agreement with him in condemning it as utterly absurd in respect to the coming into existence, or the growth, or the continuation of the molecular combinations presented in the bodies of living things. Here

scientific thought is compelled to accept the idea of Creative Power. . . . Do not be afraid of being free thinkers! If you think strongly enough you will be forced by science to the belief in God, which is the foundation of all religion. You will find science not antagonistic but helpful to religion."*

Undoubtedly, that is the solid foundation of all religion. There we have the first principle and foundation of religion, not in the thoughts, feelings, or needs of man. God emphatically IS. That great objective fact is the basis of religion, and it should be recognised by all reasonable beings. There is without doubt also the inner instinctive need of God within the human breast. As the new-born child begins instinctively to grope for its mother's breast, so the human heart is driven instinctively to grope after its God. Our hearts were made for Him, and they know only unrest till they rest in Him. Still, we cannot build religion on our subjective instincts and feelings. They are too liable to be warped and twisted by human passion and prejudice. The only firm foundation of religion is the solid bed-rock of objective fact. God is—His existence is the cause and explanation of all other being. Religion rises spontaneously from the recognition of that fact. Just as when the mind of the child recognises its parents and all that it owes to them, it naturally concludes that it has a moral duty to reverence, obey, and love them as the authors of its being; so when the mind recognises God, its Creator, it forthwith concludes that it is bound to Him by the ties of reverence, obedience, and love. That is why the Fathers and Schoolmen loved to derive the very word religion from a Latin root

* *Loc. cit.*, p. 1068.

meaning to bind man with his Creator. It expresses the moral obligation recognised by right reason that the rational creature should worship its Creator and Lord.

Natural reason, then, shows the necessity of natural religion. But natural reason refuses to admit that this is the only basis of religion. Within and without any man with eyes sees abundant traces of the goodness of his Creator, and he cannot rest satisfied with the notion that after creating the world and man, the Creator left mankind to their own feeble gropings after Himself. The supreme Artificer loves the work of His hands, and love forbids Him to desert His child. Of course, then, what all religions teach is and must be true.* God has spoken, has manifested, has revealed Himself and His Will to man. His delight is to be with and to converse with the children of men. That trait must be characteristic of divine as it is of human love. If anyone will properly dispose himself for heavenly visits, God will infallibly come to him and will take up His abode with him. Mystics like St. Teresa have ever verified the truth of those words. The "locutions" of God to the saints are matters of everyday occurrence. Their possibility is obvious, and the experience of all who have learnt how to pray proves the fact of constant communication between God and His rational creatures. As God can and does frequently speak with the individual soul, and thus teaches it and fosters its private spiritual life, so God can and does speak with chosen instruments of His, with a view to their teaching others and fostering public and social religious life. Thus He spoke to His prophets of old, thus last of all, more fully and more especially, He revealed Himself and His divine Will to the

* M. Jastrow, *Study of Religion*, p. 127.

world through His only Son. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son."* When God thus reveals His Will to mankind through a chosen messenger, He takes care that the messenger is duly accredited. There have always been plenty of false prophets in the world who claimed to speak to men in the name and with the authority of God. When He sent His only begotten Son into the world He took care to accredit and guarantee His divine mission. This He did by prophecy and miracles. Jesus Christ Himself frequently insisted on this point. When asked who He was and by whose authority He spoke and acted, He would answer: If I tell you, you will not believe Me. Consult your Scriptures, for they witness to Me; behold the miracles that I work, for they prove that I am sent by God.

> "And John called to him two of his disciples, and sent them to Jesus, saying: Art thou he that is to come, or look we for another? . . . And answering he said to them: Go, and relate to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, to the poor the gospel is preached."†
>
> "But I have a greater testimony than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to perfect; the works themselves, which I do, give testimony of me, that the Father hath sent me."‡
>
> "Jesus answered them: I speak to you and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of my Father, they give testimony of

* Heb. i. 1, 2. † Luke vii. 19-22. ‡ John v. 36.

me. . . . If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works; that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father."*

That is the divine apologetic adopted by Jesus Christ to prove His mission from God. The Catholic Church has always treasured it, and teaches and uses it to this day. Many are unconvinced by it nowadays, just as many were unconvinced by it in the time of Our Lord, but the fault does not lie in the argument.

* John x. 25-38.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND THE INDIVIDUAL

I HAVE no difficulty in understanding the practical indifference which a bad man shows towards religion. He has made up his mind not to lead a good life, and having done that, he does not care to make pretence of religion. He does not care to add hypocrisy to the list of his misdeeds. But I cannot understand the attitude of a man who poses as a good man and yet practises no religion. He tries to be a good husband, a good father, a good citizen. He prides himself on being upright and honest in his dealings with his fellow-men, but he has no inclination for religion. He does not see the use of it, he gets no benefit out of it. With such men the subjective theory of religion utterly breaks down. You appeal to his spiritual needs, you hint at those mystical yearnings and longings which at certain times surge up from the region of the subconscious. He stares at you with a blank look and says bluntly that he has never felt them. His yearnings and longings are for much more concrete things which he can see and feel. This is certainly one of the causes of that weakening of the religious spirit which all good and thoughtful men deplore in our time. The reason is because they have a false view about religion and they take no interest in it. The question is not whether one feels the need of religion or not, whether it appeals to one, whether one gets any benefit out of it. Religion rests on a great central fact. God exists,

He is our Creator and our Lord, He is our first Beginning and last End. If we are rational creatures and wish to be good men, we must recognise those tremendous facts. What should we think of a son who prided himself on being a just and honest man, a straightforward man, and a kindly neighbour, but entirely neglected his poor old parents? He never assisted them, never went to see them, never even wrote to them. He ignored them and desired to have nothing to do with them. Such a one has obviously forgotten that a good man does not pick and choose what suits him in the moral life. A good moral life is a complex thing and comprises many duties. We may not neglect any, but above all we must not neglect the most important of all. As our relation to our parents demands that we should honour them with reverence, obedience, and love, so our relation with God our Creator demands that we should recognise our indebtedness to Him and honour Him with reverence, obedience, and love. That is the first and the greatest commandment. Nobody who neglects that can lay claim to doing his duty as a good and honest man. He fails in the most important duty of all, in what constitutes the very kernel and essence of a good life.

It is no answer for an irreligious man to say that he never got any benefit out of religion. If religion is practised rightly it confers innumerable blessings on him who practises it. Still, that is not the chief reason why we should practise it. We should practise it because it is our duty and God commands it. It would be a poor excuse for neglecting our parents to say that we never got any benefit out of honouring them. We do not do our duty to them for that; neither should so mercenary a consideration influence our conduct towards God.

The religion revealed to the world by Jesus Christ is a complete guide to a perfect moral life. He is the Light of the World; one that follows Him walketh not in darkness. By that Light we see everything in its true proportions, we know what value to set on everything. We have no doubts as to whence we came or whither we are going. We know our goal and we know how to get there. The different duties and occupations of life fall into their proper place in the scale of importance or necessity. The scheme is a workable scheme, it has stood the test of two thousand years, and by means of it man can live and society can thrive and prosper. No other light gives so cheery an outlook on the world and on the future. Behind the mechanism of things, under the whirl of perpetual change, apparently heedless of man and his interests, the Christian recognises the mighty love of his Father and leaves himself trustfully in His guiding hands. The future is not the inexplicable riddle that it is for the mechanical evolutionist. The Christian looks forward to it with confidence and hope. Some have said that the Christian outlook is too good to be true. They know nothing of the wonders of infinite love. In the Christian hope millions upon millions have found the source of their sweetest joy, and of patience and resignation amid the inevitable trials and sorrows of life. The Christian religion confers these and many more benefits on human life, but it would be a great mistake to suppose that we can abandon Christian teaching and continue to reap its benefits. One of the greatest benefits which the Christian religion confers on man is to furnish him with a complete and objective rule of conduct. Public opinion, custom, and human law can do something towards making a man subject his vicious propensities to

right reason so that they will not threaten destruction to himself and to his fellows. But many external actions can be concealed from public opinion and human law; and the more important sphere of the inner man escapes their scrutiny altogether. Every thought, word, and deed is subject to the Christian code; no human act escapes the judgment of the Christian conscience. Human opinion and human law are liable to err; they sometimes approve of what is destructive to the best interests of human nature. They sanction divorce and the loosening of the ties of family life, though history and reason loudly protest that the family must be kept together at all costs. On these and on other scarcely less important points the Gospel of Christ is firm as a rock.

Private judgment can interpret and whittle away the dead letter of the Bible: it can do nothing against the voice of the ever-living Church speaking with the authority of Him who inspired the Bible. Passion and prejudice can distort a rule in favour of individualism and selfishness: they cannot warp the judgment of unerring truth. We have only to open our eyes and ears to realise the importance of preserving the objective rule of conduct which is taught us by the religion of Jesus Christ. Moral chaos is the consequence of its rejection. Let us take a few examples from recent writers.

We cannot do better than go to Germany for our first example. The rejection of the Christian standard of conduct, with its inevitable consequences, has gone furthest in Germany.

Nietzsche taught that Christianity was a retrograde movement. According to him Christianity is a religion for the degenerate, anæmic, and world-weary. Christian teachers are "body despisers"

and "preachers of death." If we would be on the right track we must get back to nature and the natural. This world is a good world if only we know how to enjoy it. Unfortunately the great mass of mankind are too degraded to lead a truly natural life. For that purpose a man must be full of vitality. He will have to be the product of careful breeding and training. He must be truly noble, and the only nobility is that of birth and blood. He will not be one of the common herd: he will be "superman." As such he will be distinguished by the "Will-to-power." For him the whole duty of man may be summed up in two words—"Be powerful." He will have two different standards of conduct. Towards his equals and those of the same class his conduct will be marked by restraint, regard, delicacy, and friendship. Towards others, he will conduct himself "not so much as better, but rather as an uncaged beast of prey. Here he enjoys liberty from all social restraint, the wilderness must compensate him for the tension produced by a long incarceration and enclosure in the peace of society." For common suffering humanity he has no pity or compassion, but rather indifference and contempt. Christianity will do very well for them; they only want "herd-morality." They will always form the necessary basis on which the social pyramid will be raised. Above them will be the commercial classes, while on the top will live and reign the "superman."

Many of the traits in this picture are clearly characteristic of the Prussian Junker as he has been revealed to an astonished world by his deeds of "frightfulness" during the war. If he shows himself in his true colours after the war he may safely be left to be dealt with by the police.

The Scotchman, John Davidson, was as violently

anti-Christian as was Nietzsche, but he had no faith in progress or the superman, and cared nothing about the future. For Davidson Nietzscheanism was merely a perverted form of Christianity, and he would have none of it.

> 'His Antichrist is Christ, whose body and blood
> And doctrine of miraculous rebirth
> Became the Overman : Back-of-beyond,
> Or—what's the phrase ? Outside good-and-evil ;
> That's his millennium, and we'll none of it.
> I want the world to be much more the world ;
> Men to be men ; and women, women ; all
> Adventure, courage, instinct, passion, power.'

Davidson's philosophy is a glorification of the animal appetites and an exhortation to all to enjoy life while it lasts. Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.

Mr. Bernard Shaw has many affinities with Nietzsche, whose conception of the superman he adopted. Still, there are great differences between the two writers. Nietzsche is individualistic, while Mr. Shaw is Socialistic. The latter does not hope for the regeneration of mankind from the superman, but from the State. It is in and through the State that the individual is to be blessed. He does not share Nietzsche's contempt for pity, nor think that Nature's methods should be imitated in the elimination of the weak and the unfit. Society should have a care for its weaker members. The only heaven that man can look forward to is to make the best of this world. "Be what you want to be, follow instinct," says Mr. Shaw, "and you will be on the right road."

All these writers are men of ability, but their schemes for the conduct of human life contain many glaring inconsistencies and contradictions. They

neither agree with each other nor with themselves.* They show that the rejection of Christian teaching and Christian morality leads inevitably to the mental and moral chaos from which the Light of the World rescued us two thousand years ago.

Professor Karl Pearson and others appear to suppose that all that is necessary is to lay down and teach to the young a code of rational ethics. Unfortunately, most of us have had the same experience as the Latin philosopher:

'Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.'

"I see the better and approve it; I follow the worse." It is not only that man's intellect is so feeble, so liable to be warped and twisted by passion and self-interest, especially in questions of conduct. His will is, if anything, weaker still, and fails so lamentably in the execution of what it knows to be right. It has been proved by the experience of ages that man cannot live a decent and rational life without the help of God. All that God need do to punish man for his rejection of Himself is simply to leave him alone. Left to himself, he quickly becomes the prey of his passions and demonstrates the necessity of religion for man. The argument has never been put more forcibly than by St. Paul, and we cannot do better than ponder over his words.

Of the pagan philosophers of old St. Paul writes:

> "So that they are inexcusable, because that when they knew God, they have not glorified Him as God, nor given thanks; but became vain in their thoughts and their foolish heart was darkened. For professing themselves to be wise they became fools. Wherefore God

* *Cf.* L. S. Thornton, *Conduct and the Supernatural.*

> gave them up to the desires of their heart, unto uncleanness to dishonour their own bodies among themselves. . . . For this cause God delivered them up to shameful affections. For their women have changed the natural use into that which is against nature. And in like manner the men also, leaving the natural use of the woman, have burned in their lusts one towards another, men with men, working that which is filthy, and receiving in themselves the recompense which was due to their error. And as they liked not to have God in their knowledge, God delivered them up to a reprobate sense, to do those things that are not fitting; being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, whisperers, detractors, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, foolish, dissolute, without affection, without fidelity, without mercy."*

The terrible picture was truthfully drawn two thousand years ago; it has stood the test of time, and is as faithful to the facts now as it was when first drawn. Experience proves only too fully that man stands in dire need of religion. The modern cry of "Back to Nature" means back to the pagan immorality described by St. Paul. Would that the evidence were less clear than it is. We cannot hope for salvation merely from the teaching of rational ethics. That would enlighten the mind, but it would not strengthen the will. And it is the will above all that needs strengthening. The theory of mechanical evolution only adds to the difficulty. As a recent writer says:

* Rom. i. 20-31.

> "On the part of scientific men the study of evolution in general, and social evolution in particular, has given rise to a sort of scientific pessimism. . . . The latest teachings of modern science have thus thrown a sort of pall over the human mind and introduced a new philosophy —a philosophy of despair, it may be called, because it robs its adherents of all hope in any conscious alteration of the course of nature with respect to man, and denies the efficacy of effort."*

As the Catholic Church constantly insists, our only hope is in the grace of God and in religion. The religion of Jesus Christ not only enlightens the mind; above all it strengthens and braces the will so as to enable it not only to keep in check the lower appetites and make them obedient to reason, but to climb the loftiest heights of heroic virtue. It is not necessary to appeal to past history in proof of it; every Catholic experiences it whenever he prays or worthily approaches the Sacraments.

* L. F. Ward, *Applied Sociology*, p. 14.

CHAPTER III

RELIGION AND THE FAMILY

ALL authorities and all thinking men are agreed on the paramount importance of the family for the public and private welfare of the people. If a man has a comfortable and happy home he need not care much as to how the world outside treats him. Outside his home he works for his living, but at home he lives. There he finds his truest and sweetest happiness. Still more does the welfare and happiness of future generations depend on the home. One of the first requisites for a happy and healthy life is to be well born. The human offspring must begin its life at home, it must be the fruit of the permanent union of a good and healthy man with a good and healthy woman. The long period of nurture of the human offspring requires still more peremptorily the bosom of the family. State-institution children will not do; they must have homes. It is in the home that the child receives its first physical, mental, and moral training. By the time that it is old enough to be sent to school the foundations of its character have been already laid. They may have been laid wisely or foolishly or simply haphazard, but in any case they have been laid, and future teachers can only build on what they find. The family is the unit of the true and natural constitution of society. The State, or society, is not an aggregate of individuals, but of families. It is for the State to regulate the external

relations of the citizens with each other and with strangers for the common good; the less it has to do with the inner life of the family the better. A man's home should be his castle, impervious to the bailiff or to the policeman as long as he pays his way and keeps the law. Great inroads have been made on this old and sound principle since the time of the Reformation. Individualism came in then, but we are beginning to see now that individualism may be stretched a great deal too far. Man is above all a social animal, and the first society into which he is born and to which he owes his early nurture and training is the family. The separate members of the family have indeed their individual rights, but the less they think of them and the less they insist on them the happier and the better will the family life be, as a rule. Among other important lessons, the great lesson of unselfishness should be learnt in the bosom of the family.

The family begins with the marriage of a man and a woman, and most modern investigators declare that history and social science proclaim that the union should be permanent and only cease with life. Monogamous and indissoluble marriage gives the best results, private and social; monogamous marriage constitutes the only type of the family that is worthy of the name. Thus the best modern social science agrees on this point with the teaching of Jesus Christ. On the celebrated occasion when Our Lord expounded that teaching, we read that His disciples observed: "If the case of a man with his wife be so, it is not expedient to marry." The Master accepted the observation as applicable to certain cases, but at the same time He taught that those who do not enter on a monogamous and indissoluble marriage must practise continence. The ancient pagan world refused to accept either

alternative, and the modern Naturalist follows its example. One of the worst features of modern life is the lowering or total disruption of family life, and we are already beginning to reap the bitter fruits. The number of legal divorces is steadily on the increase. These are only a small proportion of the practical divorces in which married couples separate and often take other partners for a time. Cases of men and women living together without going through any marriage ceremony are only too common, and such temporary unions are dissolved as easily as they are contracted. Schools of powerful and popular writers unblushingly defend the practice. In spite of history, science, and common sense, they preach the doctrine that love is free and should be given free scope for its enjoyment. Experience proves that the enjoyment which results from broken vows and blighted homes is chequered with bitterness and short-lived, but what avails the experience of other people? Too many are bent on experimenting for themselves.

It is here that the Christian religion comes in; it is precisely here that it has conferred some of its greatest blessings on mankind. Modern libertines protest that the Christian ideal is impossible. We can only answer that the history of two thousand years proves the contrary. Of course there have been bad Christians who broke the Christian laws of marriage and chastity, just as there have been bad Christians who broke other laws of Christian morality. Man's will is free; he can follow the light or not, as he pleases. The fact that some refuse to follow the light does not lessen the advantages it confers on those who are of good will and desire to follow it. The Divine Founder of Christianity knew fully what He was about while He lived on earth.

As Leo XIII. tells us:

> "Everyone knows that the happiness of public and private life depends on the family above everything else. . . . Hence it is that when the God of mercy had decreed the accomplishment of the redemption of mankind which the ages had long looked for, He so arranged its method and order that its first stages should show forth to the world a noble picture of a divinely constituted Family, in which all men might see the most perfect example of home life, of holiness, and of every virtue."*

The divine and infinitely wise Founder of Christian society began His task by laying deep the foundations of the Christian home. He was engaged on that great task during those eighteen silent years that He spent at Nazareth. He did His work in His own way, in the most efficacious way for exerting a permanent influence on mankind. He first taught by His own example. He taught the immense and most important lesson of the simple Christian home by living the simple Christian life Himself in the bosom of the first Christian family. Later on, in keeping with His common practice, He explained by word of mouth what He had already taught by example. He explained to a corrupt and decadent society that the only marriage sanctioned by God and by nature was a life-long union between one man and one woman. He was fully conscious of the difficulty of the task that He had undertaken, but He knew that He was not demanding impossibilities. In asking men to lead a perfectly moral life, in asking them

* *Brief*, June 14, 1892.

to practise loving kindness to all men, even to enemies, He knew He was demanding more than human strength by itself could perform. But He had no idea of leaving men who followed Him to their merely human resources. He taught them to do their best and ask Him for help when they could do no more. He promised to help them generously, and He keeps His promise. And so He was not content with laying down the law—What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. He raised the natural union of man and woman to the dignity of a Sacrament. The union was to be something holy, something full of deep and hidden meaning, no less than a type of His own mystical union with His spouse, the Church, and it was to be a sacramental sign, the means of giving divine help to the souls of the newly wedded pair. They would have their difficulties, at times lawless human passion might tempt them to break their marriage vows, in process of time the merely natural passion of love might cool and evaporate, but for such moments of weakness especially, the Sacrament guaranteed them divine help to do their duty to the end.

All this was not enough. Marriage is not a matter which only affects the private interests of the married couple. The welfare of human society is vitally interested in it as well. And so the Divine Founder of the Christian Church entrusted the governance of Christian marriage to His Church, both because marriage is the foundation of society and because Christian marriage is one of the seven Sacraments. The administration of those seven means of divine grace is specially committed to the Church. While the substance of the Christian law of marriage is of divine origin, the Church has received authority from her Founder

to make suitable regulations to safeguard and defend it. Through the centuries she has faithfully discharged her office. During the period of the decadence of the old Roman society, while the new peoples were laying the foundations of modern States, during the Reformation when human passion again broke through all restraint, in the modern world of decay and corruption of Christian faith and Christian ideals, the Catholic Church has faithfully taught Christ's doctrine of marriage and of the home in spite of the opposition of human passion and of the powers of the world. She deserves our deepest gratitude for what she has done for the Christian home, to which we all owe more than can easily be said. Some sociologists have maintained that religion was the foundation of the family; it is at least one of its main props and supports.

CHAPTER IV

RELIGION AND SECULARISM

WE are told that modern thought grows more and more secularist and less and less religious. There is a strong tendency to exclude religion from public life altogether. If religion is to be tolerated at all, it must be kept to its proper sphere of private life and the individual conscience. Into those sacred precincts nobody else has any right to intrude. In the privacy of that inner shrine a man may cultivate religion if he pleases and if he finds it of any help to him. But there is no place for religion in public life. Education, business, social, political, and international questions should be kept free from it. That is the doctrine which finds favour in many quarters to-day. Sometimes the modern attitude is contrasted with that of the ages of faith. The ages of faith looked upon pestilence as a scourge sent by God in punishment for sin, and prayed to be delivered from it. The modern seeks to destroy the germs of disease by sanitation and strives by prophylactics to protect the human subject from any germs that escape his vigilance. In such contrasts there is not unfrequently an element of misrepresentation.

Whatever may be the teaching of other religions, the Christian religion has never taught that human effort may be dispensed with. St. Ignatius' rule was—Work as if everything depended on yourself, trust in God as if everything depended on Him. Our Lord's own rule was—Seek first the kingdom

of God and His justice. He did not say—Seek only—but—Seek first. Other duties and cares come after the first. The blessing of God on the work is necessary if it is to prosper, but God has given us energies and talents to use ourselves, and He expects and commands us to use them. God helps those who help themselves. The Christian is encouraged to use all the means which modern science or anything else puts at his disposal, but he still finds room for putting his ultimate trust in God. I never heard of anyone who wanted a house built falling on his knees in prayer and expecting the house to rise like an exhalation from the ground, though all true Christians acknowledge and profess that—"Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

Sometimes secularists express hostility against religion because, they say, it distracts man's attention from his material interests, the only interests which matter. Questions of fact are involved in this accusation against religion. If God exists, if man has an immortal soul, if man's will is free so that it is in his power to save or lose his soul, then man's material interests are not the only things that matter, nor are they man's chief interests. I touched upon those questions of fact in the first chapter and I cannot go back and again discuss them here. If man has higher than mere material interests, sound common sense tells us that we should give due attention to what is higher even if the lower interests suffer somewhat thereby. But here I wish to insist on a consideration to which sound common sense also leads us. It is well that man should have something to distract him from being absorbed in his material interests alone. After all, life is more than the meat, life is more than the material means by which it is supported.

If a man becomes too much absorbed in his material interests, he subordinates the higher to the lower, and he degrades himself in the process. He becomes materialised, too much of a piece with the inorganic, senseless, and irrational elements to which he prostitutes the wonderful cosmos that man is. Any large town will afford us plenty of examples of what the process leads to. Even if religion did not rest on realities, even if its doctrines were nothing better than poetic fancies, and its worship nothing more than harmless indulgence of the æsthetic faculties, there would still be room for it. It would help to prevent people from becoming materialised and degraded below the level of the brute beasts.

Besides, men who care for nothing but their material interests cannot be formed into peaceful, prosperous, and progressive societies. They inevitably become too fond of money and of the indulgences and pleasures which money can buy. Their cupidity grows by what it feeds on, and it leads them to fight for what they cannot get otherwise. That is the real source and origin of the social unrest which is one of the worst and most widespread of modern maladies. That too is the real cause of modern wars, not excluding the last and the greatest of them all. Modern States do not go to war merely for the sake of conquest, or for some religious idea. Modern wars are brought about by economic causes; they are struggles for the markets of the world; they are fights for wealth. It is quite useless to attack militarism, to assert that it is the enemy, and to propose to destroy it and so prepare the way for universal peace. Militarism is only a means to an end, and that end in modern times is access to, and command of, the markets of the world. A nation that is shut out from the sea

and surrounded by economic rivals is severely handicapped in the struggle for wealth. If it wants to have a good share of the commerce of the world it must break through the ring fence that surrounds it and somehow get a seaboard. If material interests are the only things that matter rival nations will bar the way by force; there will inevitably be war, and the war will be a life and death struggle. Do we not all of us recognise that that is the position that confronts us? If material interests are the only things that matter, if religion is relegated to the inner world of the private conscience, then might is right, and the place in the sun with all its advantages belongs to the strongest.

If we want permanent peace we must go deeper and attack the roots of militarism. The Prince of Peace taught us what to do. He taught us that avarice, pride, lust of power must be attacked and that their overthrow and permanent subjection is the only way to secure peace. In other words, religion must be restored to its rightful position in public life.

I use the words advisedly. Religion has just as good a right to its position in public life as it has to its position in private life. Religion is nothing more than giving God the worship which is His due. Worship is due to Him because He created us and gave us all that we have. Just as we owe reverence, obedience, and love to our parents because under God we owe our being to them, so we owe reverence, obedience, and love to God because in a far truer sense we owe our being to Him. A child does not satisfy its obligations to its parents by merely internal reverence, submission, and love. Merely internal dispositions would be mistrusted unless they sometimes showed themselves outwardly. Even if they existed they could

not be lasting unless they were sometimes exercised. Merely internal obedience will not satisfy our obligations in cases where external acts are needed and commanded. Just in the same way merely interior religion will not satisfy our obligations towards God. Both body and soul came from Him, and both should take part in worshipping their Creator and Lord.

As man is not a solitary but a social animal, and cannot live a decent life such as his nature requires except in the society of his fellows, and all this is God's ordinance and comes from Him, so man owes God not only private and external worship but social and public worship as well.

As long as God is publicly acknowledged and worshipped there is some guarantee that His laws will be respected and obeyed by all. Isolated instances of atrocious crimes may occur, but they will meet with universal reprobation, nor will they be defended by anyone. But if God and religion are banished from public life the State and its temporal interests become the sole arbiter of right and wrong. The universal standard applicable to all nations and individuals is destroyed. Atrocities hitherto universally condemned are hailed with rapturous applause by those to whom they bring temporal advantage. Solemn treaties are regarded as mere scraps of paper, Lusitanias filled with helpless women and children are sunk, wells are poisoned, asphyxiating gases and other horrible means of destruction are used, Hague conventions are laughed at, diabolical hatred of the foe is fostered and encouraged. The justification of these things is that they succeed at any rate for the time being. They bring some temporal advantage, they serve material interests which are the only things that matter, says the secularist. The con-

clusion is the refutation of the secularist's position. It shows that even if God and religion were not the supreme realities that they are, the best interests of mankind would demand that they should be treated in public and in private with honour, respect and reverence.

CHAPTER V

RELIGION AND CONSCIENCE

THE "conscientious objector" has attracted considerable attention, but I doubt whether his significance has been fully appreciated. He says that his conscience condemns war and so he refuses to join the army. When cases have come before them the tribunals have endeavoured as a rule to satisfy themselves whether the objections to war were really conscientious. If they appeared to be really conscientious the tribunals as a rule and as a matter of expediency respected them and exempted the objector from active fighting. He was still liable to be employed on ambulance or hospital work, or in digging trenches. This may be a good practical way of getting out of the difficulty, but it can hardly be called a satisfactory solution of it. As long as the "conscientious objectors" are not very numerous no great harm follows from the course pursued. But if they became very numerous it might seriously interfere with the efficiency of the army.

It is worth while to try to solve the question on its merits and on the ground of principle apart from mere expediency. This is what a writer in the *Times* attempted to do a few weeks ago. His solution may be regarded as representative of educated, non-Catholic opinion in this country. In common with certain Anglican correspondents who had written to the *Times* on the subject, he admitted that conscience is a sacred thing. He

accepted, in other words, the Christian notion of conscience. It is the herald, the voice of God, and as such it must be obeyed rather than any merely human authority. The battle for freedom of conscience, he wrote, was fought and won in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Liberty of conscience must now be granted to everyone. Englishmen at least have no idea of persecuting anyone for conscience' sake. All this sounds very comforting and reassuring. But let us be sure that we understand what it means. The defenders of the conscientious objectors, the writer says, fail to see the point of the present question. "There is an essential difference," he goes on to say, "between liberty to hold opinions as individuals and liberty to act upon them as members of a community." He grants that individuals have the right to hold what opinions they choose and that therein lies liberty of conscience. He denies that men have the right to this liberty with regard to their actions as members of a community.

The writer obviously confounds liberty of conscience with so-called liberty or freedom of thought. No man can be prevented from thinking as he likes by external restraint, but for all that thought is not free. Freedom is an attribute of the will, not of the intellect. Every man has the right to think what is true—*the truth shall make you free.* Falsehood and error have no rights, least of all the right to freedom. The religious wars of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries were not fought for liberty of thought. Catholics and Protestants alike fought for liberty to put their beliefs in practice. In the spacious days of good Queen Bess Catholics might hold what opinions they liked on the subject of the Mass, but it was felony to say or to assist at Mass. They might hold what opinions

they chose with regard to the royal supremacy, but it was treason openly to deny it.

The sacredness of conscience and the liberty of conscience cannot be defended by drawing a distinction between the rights of the individual to form opinions and his rights as a member of society to act upon them.

The writer in the *Times* appealed to the authority of John Stuart Mill in support of the distinction. None the less it is clear that it is destructive of conscience in the Christian sense. The consciences of the early Christian martyrs forbade them to offer incense before the image of the Roman Emperor. The act was idolatrous, it was offering divine worship to a statue or at best to a man, and it was clearly against the dictates of the Christian conscience. Whether as private individuals or as members of society, the early Christians refused to be guilty of idolatry. The whole power of the Roman Empire was employed to compel them to do what the great majority of their fellow-citizens approved of and practised as a part of the national religion. The martyrs died rather than submit, and the Christian Church has honoured them ever since for their constancy. The battle for liberty of conscience was fought and won by the Christian martyrs in the first centuries of the Christian era. The blood of the martyrs put a seal on the Christian doctrine of conscience. The rights of conscience henceforth became indissolubly associated with their heroic self-sacrifice.

Liberty of conscience is destroyed by explaining that it means freedom to form opinions but not to act upon them. If conscience means anything it means that the moral judgment of the individual prescribes a definite course of action. If the individual be hindered from pursuing the definite

course of action which his conscience prescribes he has no liberty of conscience while the hindrance lasts. He may be hindered by the majority of the citizens of the country to which he belongs, but the hindrance is none the less an interference with liberty of conscience. To say that the consciences of the majority prescribe interference, and that the majority should prevail, is really to abandon the doctrine of the sacredness of conscience, and to appeal to brute force. There is no special sacredness in mere numbers. The majority in the early Christian centuries was on the side of idolatry. Many would say that the majority is generally on the wrong side, especially at the beginning of a controversy. So that to say that the conscience of the individual should submit to the judgment of the community or of the majority in a community is really to deny liberty of conscience. To say that an individual has freedom to form what convictions he pleases but not to act upon them, is also to deny liberty of conscience. The same conclusions obviously hold good if the majority in a community seeks to impose an obligation on individual members which their consciences refuse to accept and condemn as wrong.

If the conscientious objector is to be met satisfactorily we must go deeper than the distinction between a man's right to form opinions and to act upon them. The cause of all the trouble lies in the Protestant theory of private judgment. Protestantism puts the Bible in the hands of everyone and tells him that the ultimate authority in questions of faith and morals is the Bible as interpreted by his own private judgment. The private judgment of the conscientious objector tells him that the Bible condemns war and forbids Christians to wage war. The private judgment of other

people, on the contrary, tells them that the Bible does nothing of the sort. It condemns unjust wars, but not those that are waged in self-defence or for some good and sufficient cause. The contradiction is flagrant and it cannot be ascribed to God. The Bible is the Word of God and cannot teach contradictory doctrines. Conscience, according to traditional, Christian teaching, is the voice of God, the herald or the messenger of God. Mistake may arise there. What purports to be the voice of God may be the voice of self-love, interest, or cowardice. The messenger may have mistaken the message. The result is not a certain conscience, not an assured conviction that a proposed action is wrong; that is the traditional notion of conscience; but a private opinion or view that a proposed action cannot be right.

There we have the origin of the interpretation put upon liberty of conscience by the writer in the *Times*. Liberty of conscience means for him liberty to form private opinions. But then an opinion is not a certain conscience; in no sense can an opinion as to the rightness or wrongness of an action be attributed to God. Conscience in that sense cannot be called the voice or the herald of God, nor is there anything specially sacred about it. Tom Jones, the conscientious objector, is too often mistaken about other matters of importance for us to pay much attention to his views about the lawfulness of war. Especially is he likely to be mistaken when it is his interest to be so. And so his objections to join the army may be put aside without interfering with the rights of conscience. Private opinions have not the privileges of truth, and no injustice is done if lawful authority compels them to yield to the exigencies of the public good.

It was quite different with the Christian conscience in its struggle with the Roman authorities in the early centuries of the Christian era. Conscience was not regarded then as an opinion; it was a certain judgment, a conviction that a certain action was wrong. Conscience did not announce or discover a doctrine or any general principle of conduct. It was a practical judgment which applied some well-known and certain rule of conduct to a particular case. In the case in point the general principle was—Idolatry is sinful. That truth was taught in the Bible without ambiguity or possibility of its being explained away. The Christian Church taught it authoritatively as well. When, then, a Christian was told that he must perform an act of undoubted idolatry and offer divine worship to a statue, his conscience revolted against the mandate and he died a martyr's death rather than obey. He did not ask to be exempted on the ground of a private opinion of his own; there was no room for mistake; he was absolutely sure of his ground; it was guaranteed by the common teaching of the universal and infallible Church. All this leads to the conclusion that a man who refuses to join the army and to fight in a just war when ordered by the highest authority in the country to do so should not be called a *conscientious* objector. It is not in the sacred name of conscience that he objects, and the rights of conscience should not be invoked to shield his disloyalty.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGION AND BUSINESS

THE message brought to the Mother Country by Mr. W. M. Hughes, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia, stirred the country deeply. Deservedly so; for although Mr. Hughes did not prophesy smooth things, his message had about it the unmistakable ring of truth. He said bluntly that the principles on which English commerce has rested for at least a hundred and fifty years are wrong. "England has been, and is, the chief of sinners." It required great courage to say that at a distinguished gathering of English commercial men, in the chief centre of the greatest commercial empire that the world has ever seen. But the words were not spoken at random. They were the outcome of deep study, thought, and experience, and the speaker knew how to demonstrate their truth. The principles on which English commerce had rested so long were those of the classical school of political economy represented by Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill. Briefly stated, they may be summed up thus—unfettered competition, buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest, and the law that the price of labour and of commodities is settled by the demand and supply of them.

Mr. Hughes was not concerned to deny that a case can be made out in favour of those principles if the only question about trade is how to get rich as quickly as possible. But that is not the only

question. The trade of a country is intimately connected with national safety and with the social welfare of its people. "For a time," said Mr. Hughes, "the trade of a nation that treats trade as if it had no connection with national safety may make great strides, as did ours, but there comes a day of reckoning to such nations, and it has come to us." "This war," said Mr. Hughes on another occasion, "has rung the death-knell of a policy of cheapness that took no thought for the social and industrial welfare of the workmen, that mistook mere wealth for greatness, no matter whether the wealth was in our hands or those of German Jews." And he had his instances in proof of his thesis. Our foolish habit of looking only at cheapness, and disregarding wider and higher interests, has given a monopoly to our enemies of tungsten powder for the hardening of steel, of dyes, and of sugar production. We thus found ourselves at the outbreak of war largely dependent on the enemy for certain commodities of prime importance to us. We had allowed the enemy to gain a monopoly in these commodities, and by having to buy them from him we had furnished him with money to pay for ships, guns and munitions to be used against us in the war. Nor is this all. We have already paid five thousand millions of pounds, without reckoning the priceless lives lost, in order to defend ourselves against the enemy's attack. So that "Penny wise and pound foolish" is the epitaph which may be written on the tombstone of the old liberal political economy which has governed British trade for generations.

But Mr. Hughes was not so much concerned about demolishing false principles which have led England astray in the past. He is a statesman and he is thoughtful for the future. He saw that

British unpreparedness and want of organisation make the British Empire a tempting bait for her highly organised enemies. He was conscious that it would be a difficult task to organise the British Empire. *Tantœ molis erat Romanam condere gentem.* The task required all the skill and all the energy of her greatest statesmen. But it was to be done; the welfare of the world and her own safety demanded it. The enemy is buoyed up with the hope of conquering for himself the trade of the world after the war is over. There is sure to be a great and rapid development of commerce, and the profits will go largely to those who are best prepared to reap them. We must be ready with a definite and well-thought-out policy for the defence and preservation of the Empire. Enemy competition will not be the only danger to be confronted after the war. The war has necessitated great changes in the national life and industry. Prices have risen enormously. The cost of the war will press upon the shoulders of the people for generations to come. Unless the situation is carefully managed, all this will inevitably lead to a period of domestic strife, to a war between class and class hardly less disastrous than the war of nations. Mr. Hughes saw clearly what is wanted. His mind is filled with a glorious vision of a future British Empire:

> "The British Empire organised for trade, for industry, for economic justice, for national defence, for the preservation of the world's peace, for the protection of the weak against the strong. That is a noble ideal. It ought to be, it must be, ours."

The old system favoured individualism. It professed to give everybody a fair field and no

favour. If everyone was sure to reap the fruits of his labour, everyone would put forth all his energies, and in working his utmost for himself, each would work for the common good in the aggregate. It looked like a sound and sane philosophy. It only forgot the facts of human nature and of life. It forgot that in capacity and in opportunity men are, and must be, very unequal. And so the system of unfettered competition meant in practice that a few grew enormously rich, while the great majority were reduced to the condition of "hands," they became mere instruments of production. Unfettered competition meant in practice selfishness, class hatred, envy and malice. It meant sweating, starvation wages, and oppression of the poor. It meant the lowering of the quality of commodities by tricks of trade which left nothing unadulterated, and called nothing by its proper name. To make sure of a profit, traders frequently charged as much as they thought the customer could pay. The very notion of a fair and reasonable price for commodities, the just price as it used to be called, was almost lost. You got as much as you could for your goods, and gave as little as you could for them. That was business; it was buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest.

The stress and the strain of the war have given the death-blow to all these ideas. A nation relying on them was found to be no match for a nation organised in every department for national action and for conquest. If it was not desirable to jump from one extreme to the other, if it was not wise to emulate the excessive organisation of the enemy, national safety imperatively demanded that something should be done. After all there is a middle course, and there as a rule, in politics as in morals, salvation is to be found. For individual and class

selfishness it should not be impossible to substitute a care for the common weal. The common good should be the supreme aim of governments, and individuals and classes should learn to subordinate private interest to the common welfare of the whole. Instead of *laissez faire* and unfettered competition, rulers should strive to make economic justice prevail. Commerce and trade are not governed only by physical and necessary laws; they are departments of human life and are subject to moral law. The classical school of political economists was fond of arguing about the law of demand and supply as if it were a law of astronomy. They used to say that it was as futile for governments to try to interfere with its working as it would be to try to interefere with the law of gravitation.

In one of his little books on political economy Dr. Cunningham, the Anglican Archdeacon of Ely, has told us that we have outlived the old notion that there is a just price, a fair and reasonable price for everything. The experience of the war has taught us what to think of views like those.

> "Other food products generally were unduly inflated in price early in August by the anxiety of consumers to lay in stocks. This was checked by reassuring statements from the Government as to supplies of the principal products both present and prospective, and the inflation of prices was prevented on the appointment by the government of a standing committee of retail traders who fixed from day to day maximum retail prices."*

This shows that the "economic justice" which forms one feature of Mr. Hughes's policy for the

* *The "Times" History of the War*, i., 193.

future is not an impossible ideal. If we add to it the other feature, "the protection of the weak against the strong," we shall have the chief elements of the time-honoured Christian teaching that the firm foundations of States are Justice and Charity. The reader will not be left under the impression that I am preparing the way for advocating Socialism. That would be no remedy for existing evils; it errs by excess in the opposite direction. It is, however, too large a subject to be treated here.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGION AND LIBERTY

WE say, and say truly, that we are fighting for the liberties of Europe. The brave Belgian people chose rather to see their country overrun and its fairest cities destroyed than be deprived of their freedom. But the enemy also asserts that he is fighting for freedom. He wants room to expand, to grow to the full stature that nature intended him to reach. He asserts that he is fighting for the freedom of the seas which are held in bondage by the naval predominance of England. The country seems to have made up its mind to abandon its long-cherished idol of free trade. Even freedom may be bought at too dear a rate. If we are determined to conquer and to crush militarism we see the necessity of greater organisation. But organisation means restraint of individual initiative, it means some curtailment of freedom. Everybody, except the anarchist, sees that some sort of government is absolutely necessary, that people cannot be allowed to act and to speak just as they like, that some restriction of liberty is necessary to prevent society from lapsing into barbarism. On the other hand the philosophers who are most in vogue tell us that freedom is a dream, a shadow without substance. According to them, everything that happens in the universe is the necessary outcome of antecedent necessary causes. It is almost beyond dispute, says Mr. Bertrand Russell, that Man is the product of causes which had no

prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms. In action, in desire, we must submit perpetually to a tyranny of outside forces. It is only in imagination that we can indulge in dreams of freedom. In thought, in aspiration, we are free, free from our fellow-men, free from the petty planet on which our bodies impotently crawl, free even while we live from the tyranny of death.* Some time ago I attended a lecture given by a man of science on a subject connected with eugenics. After the lecture I remarked to him that he seemed to me to have treated the matter from too mechanical a point of view and had not allowed for free will. He answered that the question of free will was undoubtedly at the root of the whole subject, that at one time he had studied the question and had tried to write something about it. But he honestly confessed that as he thought and wrote free will seemed to vanish into thin air, there was simply no room for it in his materialistic conception of the universe. It will be worth while to try to make two or three points as clear as possible in so important and intricate a question.

And first of all we must recognise that the freedom of the individual will is ultimately the question at issue. Poets may indulge their fancy and write beautiful things about political and civil liberty, but if man's individual will is not free political and civil liberty is a mere pretence. Political and civil action whether called free or unfree is simply what it must be given the antecedent circumstances. Patriots who thought they were dying for their country's freedom simply could

* *Philosophical Essays*, p. 63.

not do otherwise. It is as far from the truth to call their actions heroic and celebrate them in song as it would be to talk of the heroism of the moon and her bold flights through the realms of space. If the individual human will is not free then there is no such thing as freedom in the visible universe. Every slightest event is the necessary result of blind and necessary antecedent conditions.

Mr. Bertrand Russell seems to claim exemption of thought from this iron law of necessity. Thought is indeed, as he says, free from our fellow-men, in the sense that our fellow-men cannot put fetters on our thoughts. They can fetter our limbs, they can cast the whole body into prison, but the mind can still wander unfettered abroad. Our minds are free from the petty planet on which our bodies impotently crawl, in the sense that we can in thought travel to Mars and bear its inhabitants company. But if the individual will is not free it is clear that thought is not free either. Like everything else it is but the resultant of antecedent and necessary conditions. It is but the flash which accompanies some change in the substance of the brain, and we might as well talk of the liberty of the flame that rises from heated coal, as of the freedom of thought. In discussing questions of freedom we must focus our attention on the freedom of the human will, which lies at the root of all other liberties.

In the question of free will every person of sound mind has within himself the main factors required for a solution of the problem. What a man of sound mind is directly conscious of must be true if the human mind is really capable of attaining to truth. Let us then examine the working of our own minds.

At the very outset we are struck with a

phenomenon which is quite different from the phenomena exhibited by the world of matter and force. Material forces may be reduced to those of attraction and repulsion. Water falling under the action of gravitation is an instance of the one, steam expanding under the application of heat is an instance of the other. In both cases one particle of matter acts on another, it influences something outside itself, either drawing it towards itself or repelling it from itself. The action of mind is altogether different. Thought turns back upon itself, the mind reflects upon itself, and becomes self-conscious. Mind, then, is not made up of material particles which mutually attract or repel each other. It is not extended in space. It is a simple, unextended substance, a spiritual substance, which is indeed intimately connected and united with matter, but which for all that is quite different from it.

My thought can represent to me something which I apprehend as good and desirable. I have a friend who lives twenty miles off and I always derive pleasure and advantage from visiting him. The thought of paying him a visit comes into my mind this morning. The presence of the thought at once calls into action that other faculty of my spiritual nature which I call my will. The will is a faculty which is always more or less attracted by what is presented to it as something good. It cannot initiate an action of itself. Thought must always go before, and the thought must be of something apprehended as good if the will is to be attracted by it. The will shrinks from what is apprehended as evil. But as the sense of sight is necessarily attracted by what is pleasant to look upon, as the sense of taste is necessarily gratified by what is agreeable to it, so the will is neces-

sarily attracted more or less by what is apprehended in thought as good. If the object is represented as so exceedingly good that there is no admixture of evil in it, and its possession would give unlimited and unadulterated happiness, the will is necessarily and overwhelmingly attracted by it. The human will is not free when such an object is presented to it. The human will necessarily desires complete happiness. But out of Heaven there is no object whose possession can render man completely and perfectly happy. All created goods are limited, they all have some imperfection or evil mixed with them, and when they are presented to the mind in thought, the mind can turn away from the contemplation of the good which they contain to the contemplation of the evil which is mingled with them. That power is the rational foundation of the freedom of the will. Man is endowed with the power of stopping and deliberating about the pursuit of a finite good which has been presented to the will by thought. Although probably there is always some indeliberate movement of the will towards an object which thought presents to it as good and desirable, yet when that object is finite and mingled with imperfection, thought can step in and keep the will in suspense by presenting to it the disadvantages which its pursuit and possession would entail. And so when the thought of visiting my friend who lives twenty miles off occurs to me, although at first I feel my will attracted by the prospect I do not necessarily set off on my visit. If my will was a material force the whole mechanism of my being would at once be set in motion towards my friend when the attraction was felt. But being a spiritual substance I can say to my will—Stay, let us consider the proposal. If I visit my friend to-day, I

shall lose a day's work; I shall not be able to keep the appointment I made with another friend who is coming to visit me this afternoon. No, I cannot go to-day, and so the first movement of the will is checked, it does not put the rest of the machinery, which I call myself, in motion. If, on the contrary, on deliberation, I find no great obstacle in the way of paying a visit to my friend, I have nothing to do but to allow the movement of the will, which was started by the thought of my friend, free play. I simply allow it free scope for execution. Mind and will work in harmony, together they quickly settle to go by motor not by train, and to take my child Mary with me, because my friend always likes to see his godchild. And in all this I feel and know that I could have determined otherwise if I had chosen to do so. Not all the learned treatises of all the mechanical philosophers who ever lived could ever persuade me to the contrary. I am convinced that I chose freely to visit my friend, nothing without or within constrained me to it. I am certain that I chose freely to go by car, and that I could have taken the train by preference if I had chosen. I am certain, too, that I was not under compulsion when I elected to take little Mary with me. If I acted freely here, my will is free in large spheres of human life. Nor am I acquainted with anything in the theory of causation, or in that of the conservation of energy, which gainsays my brief exposition of an important doctrine of the Church.

CHAPTER VIII

MIGHT AGAINST RIGHT

PRESIDENT WILSON'S speech to Congress at the beginning of April, 1917, was a notable pronouncement in many respects. It seems to have taken Congress by storm. It was a solemn call to America to intervene in the great European war in defence of her own rights and liberties, of the rights and liberties of other nations great and small, and of the universal dominion of right. The President was at pains to point out that he did not desire to make war on the German people, but on its "irresponsible Government, which has thrown aside all considerations of humanity and right and is running amok."

But Germany also professes to be fighting for its rights. As a great and powerful nation it claims a place in the sun and aspires to the proud position of a world-power. To attain its end it claims the right to wage ruthless submarine warfare, to sink merchant ships without warning, and to treat all who attempt to defend themselves as pirates and outlaws. It is clear that the bureaucracy which directs the war on behalf of the Central Powers has a different conception of right from that of President Wilson, and it will be worth while to examine what it is. It is a very old idea which identifies right with might.

> 'The good old rule, the simple plan,
> That they should take who have the power
> And they should keep who can.'

The theory was well known to the writer of the Book of Wisdom: "Let our strength be the law of justice, for that which is feeble is found to be nothing worth." For centuries past it has had powerful advocates among English and German philosophers, beginning with Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury. With the triumph of the theory of Evolution it became the pet doctrine of the materialists. That school of thought regards the universe as a vast arena of conflicting forces, in which the victory is ever for the strongest. The war of nations which is now being fought out is but the logical outcome of those theories; it has been produced by them, and it is their judgment and condemnation: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We shall get to the gist of the matter if we enquire into the origin of those rights which we call natural. We claim the right to live and not to be hindered in our endeavour to obtain the necessary means thereto; a man claims the right to marry if he choose to do so, and to bring up a family. Where do such natural rights as these come from?

Materialists, evolutionists, and Pantheists assert that all rights come from the State. It is clear that the concession of Government, or of the State, is the source and origin of such positive rights as the right to vote for a member of Parliament and the right to the old-age pension. According to the schools of thought just mentioned, man's natural rights have precisely the same source and origin. The citizens belonging to a State derive their right to devote themselves to their lawful pursuits from the law of their country, and the law of their country is ready to put in motion the whole force of the State if need be in order to protect its members in the lawful exercise of their rights. Outside the

limits of the State club law prevails; the solitary individuals who inhabit those wastes have no rights except those which their own strength gives them and which their own right hand is prepared to enforce. The war has shown us to what this theory leads. It furnishes the groundwork of a very perfect and very thorough national organisation, which gives the State great advantages in a contest with other less perfectly organised peoples. But the price paid is a great deal too heavy.

While the Government is everything, the individual citizen tends to become a mere pawn or cypher. The Government uses its tremendous power to turn every particle of the national energy to account for its own advantage. It directs the national system of education, and thus it can inspire the minds of the citizens with its own ideals. It can train their characters so that they become pliant instruments for the attainment of the national ambitions. Its command over the reptile press and the scarcely less obsequious leaders of public opinion in the chairs of the universities and in the pulpits of the churches makes it an easy matter for the Government to colour and interpret events as it chooses. The docile people are certain to accept the interpretation which the Government wishes them to accept, whether the question be concerning the advisability of employing ruthless submarine warfare or the reducing of a conquered population to the state of slavery. Solemn treaties with foreign nations no longer bind in altered circumstances; they are merely "scraps of paper." The provisions of international law must give way before the imperative law of necessity. There is no sanction behind them to make them respected and operative. In any case where a concession either to subjects or to foreign nations is felt to be

too inconvenient, it can always be revoked. What the State gave, the State can take away—*salus populi suprema lex.*

There is another theory which makes personality the source and origin of human rights. A man has rights because he is a person, not a thing. A person is an end to himself and must not be subordinated, like a thing, to somebody else's end. All men are equal and independent of each other as far as natural rights are concerned. A man has a right to do anything he likes, provided that it does not violate the equal right of somebody else. If the first theory makes the State omnipotent and the individual nothing, this second theory makes the individual everything. He becomes a god and a supreme lawgiver in his solitary independence. If the first theory tends to absorb the individual in society, the second loses sight of society in its exaggerated individualism. Man is a social animal, and national efficiency as well as many other things of great importance imperatively require that man's social side should not be lost sight of. Competitive individualism is too well known and has done too much harm of late years to be a serious danger for the future. The whole trend of the modern world is in the opposite direction.

The true theory about the source of human natural rights lies midway between these two extremes. It first of all lays down the important principle that rights connote and arise from duties. We hear a great deal about rights, while duties are left in the background. In truth the two stand and fall together. Like father and son, they are correlative terms; one implies the other. A man has certain natural rights because he has certain natural duties to fulfil. Parental right, the right of a

parent to rear and educate his child, comes from the fact that he has a duty to rear and educate his offspring. That duty is imposed on him by nature and by God, the Author of nature. A man has a right not to be prevented from procuring for himself by lawful means the necessary support for himself and for his family. The reason is because it is his duty to do so; nature and God, the Creator of nature, have put him under an obligation to provide for his family.

Such duties and such rights are properly termed natural, because they flow from man's very nature. They do not come from the State; they exist prior to the State, and the State is guilty of unjustifiable meddling if it interferes with those rights. If those natural duties are not fulfilled, if those natural rights are not properly exercised, the State may indeed intervene, it has authority to compel defaulters to do their duty, but it should interfere only when necessity requires its intervention.

Thus there is something sacred and compelling in the notion of natural rights, and men do wisely and properly to be obstinate in their defence. The most precious part of freedom consists in the unfettered exercise of man's natural rights, and however well organised a State may be, the people are slaves if the State hampers them in the exercise of their natural rights.

The Catholic Church defends those rights, and in fulfilling her task she confers one of the greatest blessings on mankind and proves herself the true friend and protector of human freedom.

CHAPTER IX

THE NEW CODE OF CANON LAW

AFTER more than thirteen years of strenuous labour given to the gigantic task entrusted to them by Pius X., the Commissioners appointed for the codification of Canon Law have at length finished their work. The new Code of Canon Law is published in the official organ of the Vatican, and is thereby promulgated for the whole Catholic world. There are some abstruse things in Canon Law, it is true, but the greater part of it has to do with the ordinary details of everyday Catholic life. It consists of regulations about fasting and abstinence, the due observance of Sundays and Holidays of Obligation, the mutual duties of pastors and flocks, the administration of the Sacraments, Christian marriage, Christian burial, and innumerable other matters of interest to the laity no less than to the clergy. We may then presume that a short account of the new Code will be welcome.

It has always been an article of Catholic faith that Christ gave the prelates of His Church authority to make laws and regulations concerning matters of religion. There is plenty of evidence in the New Testament that the Apostles used the authority with which they were invested. They passed disciplinary decrees in the Council held at Jerusalem, and St. Paul makes it quite evident that he was conscious of possessing legislative and judicial authority to be exercised by him in the name of Christ. Before the end of the first century the

Popes, as the successors of St. Peter, were exercising legislative authority over the Christians of East and West. As time went on the issue of Papal rescripts and decrees became more frequent. The receipt of a Papal decision on some disputed question settled the matter for Catholics—"Roma locuta est, causa finita est," wrote St. Augustine in Africa—"Rome has spoken, the case is ended." Especially in the General Councils of the Church was her legislative authority exercised. The Council of Nicæa, for example, at the beginning of the fourth century prescribed rules for the treatment of those who lapsed from the Faith in times of persecution. In course of time laws emanating from ecclesiastical authority, called Canon Laws, became very numerous, and in the sixth century learned men began to make collections of them. These collections gradually grew in bulk and number. The most famous of them all is that composed by Gratian, a Benedictine monk, in the middle of the twelfth century. In the next century Pope Gregory IX. authorised St. Raymond of Pennafort to make a collection which he promulgated by Papal authority in 1234. Gratian's collection, the decretals issued by command of Gregory IX., and a Sixth Book added by Boniface VIII. to the five books of the decretals of Gregory IX., make up the "Corpus juris canonici."

Gregory IX. prefixed a brief to his volume of decretals beginning with the words "Rex pacificus." "The King of peace in loving kindness," he wrote, "decreed that his subjects should be chaste, peaceable, and modest. But unbridled cupidity stirs up so many quarrels every day that unless justice kept it in check peace would be banished from the world. And so laws are made so that evil passions may be restrained under the rule of right by which the

human race is taught, so that it may live honestly, do no injury to others, and give to everyone his due. The many constitutions and decrees of our predecessors scattered in many volumes caused confusion, and some were not to be found in books, so that their doubtful validity caused uncertainty in judicial decisions." For the common good and for the use of students, he adds, he had commanded his collection to be made, and to be used in the ecclesiastical courts, forbidding private persons in future to make unauthorised collections of canons. The Brief is so suited to present circumstances that it might have been written by Benedict XV.

Nearly seven centuries have passed since the time of Gregory IX., centuries eventful in the history of the Church and demanding ever-increasing activity on the part of the Holy See. The mass of ecclesiastical legislation had grown to an enormous bulk, some laws had become obsolete, others had lost some of their usefulness through changed conditions, and in not a few cases it was difficult to say what the law was. Pius X. explained this in the Motu Proprio for the revision of the Canon Law which he issued on March 19, 1904, about six months after his election to the Chair of St. Peter. He had taken as the motto for his pontificate "to restore all things in Christ." Christian faith had become weak, if not altogether extinguished, in many parts of what once was Christendom; Christian morality was giving way to worse than pagan licence. As priest and as Bishop he had had long personal experience of the needs of the people, and he was convinced that Christian discipline needed renewing and strengthening. The laws of the Church, made for the sanctification and salvation of souls, must be more generally known, and brought once more into common observance. To these ends he thought nothing would conduce so

much as the codification of the whole Canon Law. Something had already been done in this direction. Pius IX. had had ecclesiastical censures codified. These censures had been divided into classes, and a special numbered paragraph had been given to each under its appropriate heading. Leo XIII. had done the same with the rules concerning forbidden books, and the laws concerning Institutes with simple vows of religion. Pius X. determined to do the same for the whole body of Canon Law, and entrusted the work to Cardinal Peter Gasparri and a large number of experts. After several years of constant labour a rough draft of the laws of the Church was drawn up and sent to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic world. These were requested to make their suggestions on the draft submitted to them and send them to the Commissioners. Finally the new Code was drawn up, and it is now published authoritatively by Benedict XV.

The new Code makes a handsome volume of 522 pages in large octavo. Following time-honoured precedent, the whole of the matter is divided into five books. The first book lays down certain general principles of ecclesiastical law; the second treats of the duties and rights of ecclesiastical persons; the third describes the law concerning sacred things, such as the Sacraments, churches, sacramentals, etc.; the fourth treats of the processes to be followed in ecclesiastical trials; and the fifth, of ecclesiastical crimes and punishments. The five books contain altogether 2,414 canons or laws, numbered consecutively. Many of the canons contain two, three, or more sub-sections.

The canons are framed in simple and clear language, so that they can be understood easily and be referred to as easily. We may take an example or two by way of illustration. Sometimes troubled

penitents ask their confessors whether they are obliged to follow summer time in observing the law of fasting before Holy Communion or the law of abstinence on Fridays. The 33rd Canon of the new Code gives the answer to such questions as these. It provides as follows: "In reckoning the hours of the day the common practice of the place is to be followed; but in the private celebration of Mass, in the private recital of the Divine Office, in receiving Holy Communion, and in observing the law of fasting and abstinence, although the common practice of the place be different, anyone may follow either the true local time, or the mean time, or the legal time, whether regional or special and extraordinary." It was thought by some that when the new Code came into force the Easter Communion would have to be made in the parish church of each one. Canon 859 § 3 of the new Code decrees: "Each one should be advised and persuaded to receive his Easter Communion in his parish church; and if he receives it elsewhere he must notify his parish priest that he has fulfilled the Easter Precept." Canon 947 makes it quite clear that when in case of necessity the short form with one unction has been used in administering Extreme Unction, there remains the obligation to supply the usual unctions if the danger ceases.

IMPORTANT CHANGES

The principal object of Pius X. was to codify the existing laws of the Church; but the opportunity has been taken to revise some of them and to bring them into greater harmony with the modern needs of the Church. This is especially noticable with regard to the diriment impediments of marriage. The impediment of age has been raised from fourteen and twelve years for the man and woman to

sixteen and fourteen respectively. The impediment of consanguinity has been changed from the fourth collateral degree to the third as regards its extension, and in the same way that of affinity has been restricted to the second degree. The spiritual relationship arising from Confirmation has been abolished as a diriment impediment of marriage, and no spiritual relationship is contracted with the parents of the person baptised either by him who baptises or by the sponsors. A few other changes have also been made in this matter.

Although the new Code is duly promulgated by its publication in the "Acta Apostolicæ Sedis," Benedict XV. decrees that it shall not come into force until Whit-Sunday, May 19, 1918.

An edition of the Code is announced as shortly to be published with a preface, notes, and index of matters by Cardinal Gasparri, and it will be eagerly awaited by all who are interested in Canon Law.

Politicians and writers of all sorts tell us that after the war peace will dawn on a new Europe and a new world. For some years past the Church has been engaged in perfecting her organisation, and now she has revised the body of laws by which she is governed. Whatever the future brings with it, the Catholic Church will be found ready to do what she can to restore all things in Christ.

CHAPTER X

THE CANON LAW CODE AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION

THE Catholic position with regard to education is nowhere stated more plainly, more briefly, and more authoritatively than in the recently issued Code of Canon Law. In a few short paragraphs the traditional teaching of the Catholic Church on this important subject is set forth, and the policy to which the Church has constantly adhered is explained. It may be worth while to direct the attention of our readers to those Canons. They will help to clear up hazy notions on the subject, and they will help us to realise how closely it is bound up with our Christian faith.

One of the fundamental principles is laid down in Canon 1113, which is as follows:

> "Parents are bound by a most serious obligation to procure as far as possible the religious, moral, physical, and civil education of their children, and to provide also for their temporal welfare."

By "civil education" without doubt the Code means the imparting of that knowledge and training to the children which will enable them to fill worthily the place which they are destined to occupy in civil life. We may notice how broad are the ideas of the Church. She is influenced by no narrow spirit in her educational aims. By the law of nature the young during their years of immaturity are to be fitted to take their place in life. The duty

of so fitting them is imposed by nature on those who brought them into the world. By the very nature of things parents are responsible for the education of their children, and, as long as they do their duty, they cannot be deprived of that responsibility by any human power. Religion gives its sanction to this natural duty and enforces it. The Fourth Commandment indeed only makes express mention of the duty of children to respect, love, and obey their parents; parents have a right to this. But they have this right because they have the corresponding duty of bringing up, educating, and providing for their children as long as these are unable to provide for themselves.

The mutual relation of parental duties and parental rights is brought out in Canon 1372 of the new Code:

> "Parents, and all who are in the place of parents, have the right and most serious duty of procuring the Christian education of their children."

There we come to another great principle of Catholic education, the rights of the Christian Church. Catholics, as members of the Church, fully recognise and admit the rights of the Church in the education of her children. She received her commission to teach from her Divine Founder. "Go," He said, "teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The Church, then, is under the obligation to teach especially her own members what their duties are, and what is the extent and limit of them. She is faithful to her office and insists that baptised Christians shall receive a Christian education. A Christian education means that nothing should be taught Christian children which may weaken their

faith or endanger their morals. It means that the relative importance of the various departments of education should be settled according to the teaching of Christ. The tendency is to relegate religious and even moral education to a secondary place in the school curriculum, or altogether to pass over those all-important subjects. Christ put them first, they belong to the greatest and the first Commandment. In a scheme of Christian education they must retain their pre-eminent position. As Canon 1372 says:

> "All Catholics are to be brought up from childhood in such a way that not only nothing be taught them which is opposed to the Catholic religion and to good morals, but so that religious and moral training hold the first place."

Practically, as the Catholic Church knows only too well from long experience in many lands, this position of honour for the Catholic religion and for Catholic morality can only be secured by Catholic teachers in Catholic schools. In other schools, even if there is no hostility to Catholicism, the atmosphere is chilled by a still more deadly indifference in which the tender plants of Catholic faith and morals in the young cannot live and thrive. The Church has the duty and the right to protect her children from these dangers, and so she forbids them to go to non-Catholic schools. Canon 1374 enacts:

> "Catholic children must not go to non-Catholic, undenominational, or mixed schools, which are open to non-Catholics."

In order that Catholic children may be able to obtain the kind of education which their faith re-

quires, the Catholic Church claims the right to found Catholic schools. For many centuries she has exercised this right. The Third Council of the Lateran decreed as follows: "Since the Church of God, like a good mother, is bound to provide so that the poor who can get no help from the wealth of parents should not be deprived of the opportunity of learning and making progress in letters, let a competent benefice be assigned in every cathedral church to a schoolmaster, who will teach clerics and poor scholars for nothing." The Fourth Council of the Lateran in A.D. 1215 renewed and extended this law to all other principal churches. Those decrees were inserted in the "Corpus Juris" authorised by Gregory IX., and they were taught in all the schools of Canon Law throughout Christendom. They were quoted as Chapters 1 and 4 in the Title "De Magistris." It is not without precedent, then, that the Catholic Church enacts as follows in the new Code:

> "The Church has the right to found schools of all kinds and of all grades" (Canon 1375).

It is well known that very many of the oldest educational foundations in the country owe their origin to the provident action of the Catholic Church.

To prevent the main object of Catholic schools being forgotten the new Code lays down that:

> "Religious instruction must be given in all schools of whatever grade suitably to the age of the scholars" (Canon 1373).

It is to be noted that the Catholic clergy, Bishops and priests, are bound by these laws, not less but more than the laity. One of the chief burdens and anxieties of the Catholic clergy is to provide for

the Catholic education of their people. In striving to obtain their educational rights they are not striving after power or money, they are simply doing their duty. The new Code is not silent on this point. Canon 1379 prescribes:

> "If Catholic elementary and secondary schools do not exist, Bishops must take care that they be built."

The Catholic position, then, on the education question is clearly outlined in the new Code of Canon Law. It may be stated in this way. The education of children belongs by natural and divine law to their parents. This does not mean that the parents can give them any sort of education they like, or no education if they so please. They have the right because they have the duty to so educate their children that they may be fit to take the place in life which is destined for them, and attain the end for which they came into the world. Catholic parents recognise this duty, and they also recognise their obligation to accept the teaching and guidance of the Catholic Church as to the nature, extent, and limits of this and of all their other duties. Moreover, the Catholic Church has received a divine commission to teach religion and morality to all men, and more especially to her own baptised members. Practically, she can only exercise her right and fulfil her duty by requiring that Catholic children should be educated in Catholic schools under Catholic teachers. For centuries she has exercised this right, as history abundantly testifies.

I can imagine some of my readers asking: "And where does the State come in? Has the State no rights and duties with regard to the education of its citizens?"

The State has similar rights and duties with

regard to the education of its citizens to those which it has with regard to their other natural rights. The State has the duty and the right to defend and protect the lives of its citizens. It cannot deprive them of their lives unless they have forfeited them by their crimes. The State has the right and the duty to protect the property of its citizens. It cannot deprive them of it, although it may levy contributions for the common good. Just in the same way it is the province of the State to protect and defend the natural right of parents to educate their own children. The State was founded to protect the natural rights of its members. It betrays its trust and becomes a tyrant if it takes them away. A Socialist State would be guilty of robbery if it deprived its members of their property against their reasonable wish. A State which obliges parents to send their children to schools where they receive an education of which the parents reasonably disapprove introduces Socialism into education. The State has the right to compel negligent parents to do their duty. If parents are bringing up their children in crime and vice, the State in the last resort can remove such children from the control of their unworthy parents.

But as long as parents do not abuse their parental rights and desire to do their duty by their children, it only remains for the State to provide them with the means of giving their children an adequate education.

This is all that Catholics at any rate ask of the State. They ask for a fair share of the public money which is devoted to education. The State may, of course, see that it gets good value for the money that it provides. If it were satisfied with fulfilling these legitimate functions, the education question would be solved as far as Catholics are concerned.

The State would have no reason to mistrust or complain of its Catholic subjects. They have shown in the great war that they yield in patriotism to none, and that they are fully ready to take their share in the common burdens.

The Catholic ideal is that parents, Church, and State should loyally work together to give such an education to the young that when they come to maturity they may be fitted to take their place in the national life, lead good, decent, and useful lives, and save their souls in the end.

Printed in England

241.04
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44227